



645
SEP 89
US 75¢
CAN 95¢
UK 50p



SUPERMAN

FEATURED IN

ACTION

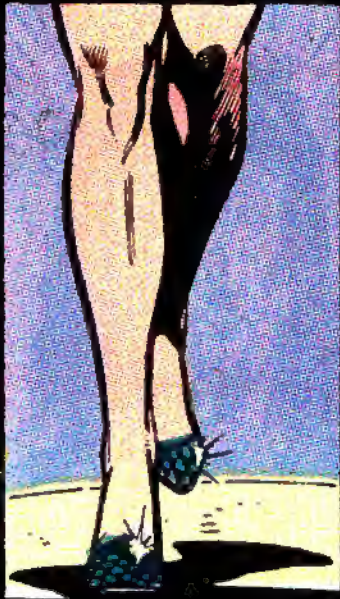
COMICS



**WHATEVER
MAXIMA WANTS...
MAXIMA GETS!**

DON'T MISS
SUPERMAN
36
IN 2 WEEKS!

METROPOLIS... "THE GREATEST AMERICAN CITY OF THE 20TH CENTURY," CLAIMS THE LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE... AND MAYBE THEY'RE RIGHT.



AIN'T THAT RIGHT?
YOU READY TO
PARTY WITH 'BERTO,
AIN'T YOU?



'SMATTER? YOU
'FRAID TO TALK?

'EY, I
TREAT YOU
RIGHT!



HOLD! NO ONE MAY
TOUCH MY LADY
MAXIMA!

LET US
PASS OR FACE
THE CONSEQUENCES!



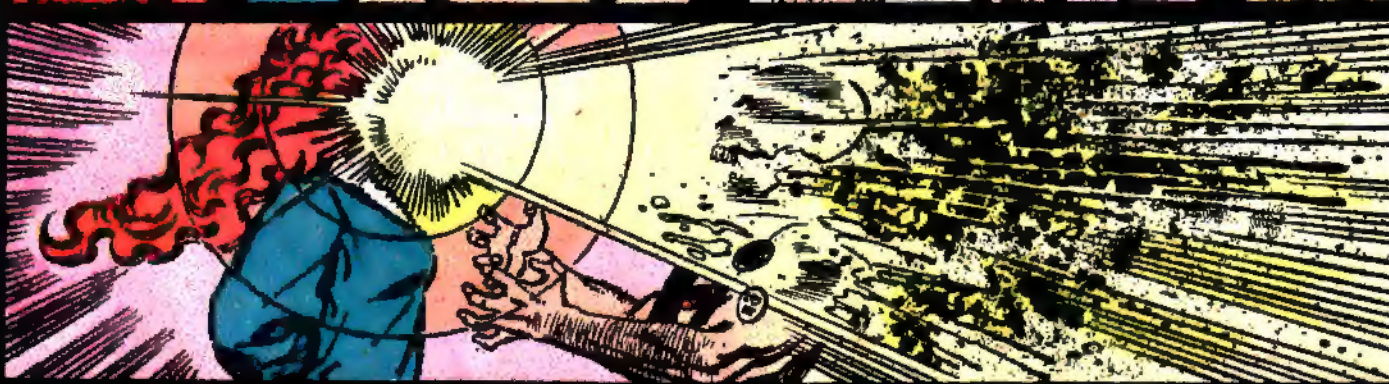
LISTEN, OLD GON! IF
YOUR "LADY" AIN'T NICE
TO ME, I BE BAD TO
HER... REAL BAD!



WHA--?!?



THREATS TO MY LADY
WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!
THERE CAN BE BUT ONE
PUNISHMENT!



MY LADY IS IN
NEED OF SERVANTS.
YOU WILL ALL COME
WITH ME.

MEANWHILE, HIGH OVER CENTRAL ARIZONA, THE CHAMPION OF METROPOLIS RECEIVES A HELPING HAND FROM AMERICA'S NEWEST SUPER-HERO...

STARMAN

CREATED BY STERN & LYLE

HOW'S THAT, SUPERMAN?

FANTASTIC, STARMAN... JUST LIKE A DAY AT THE BEACH!

"MY LADY MAXIMA!"

SUPERMAN

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

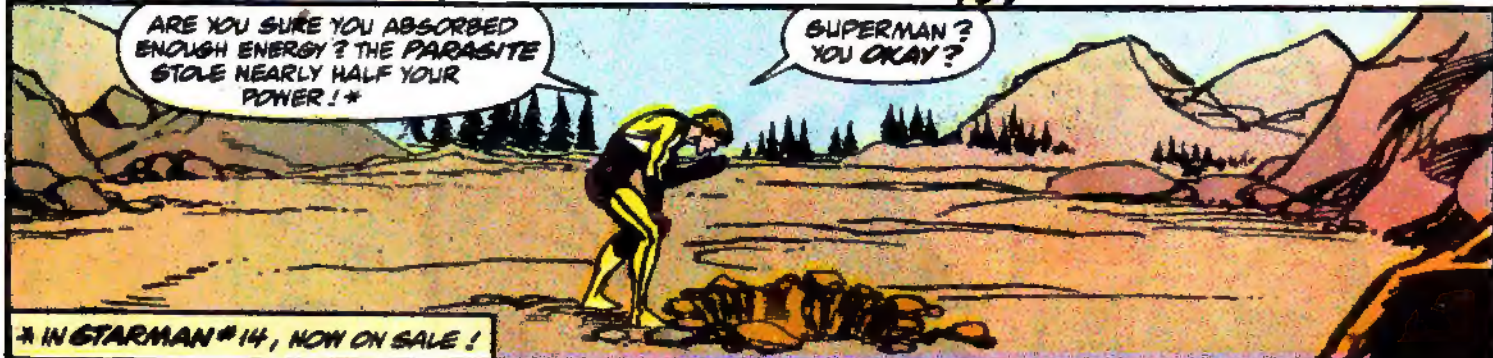
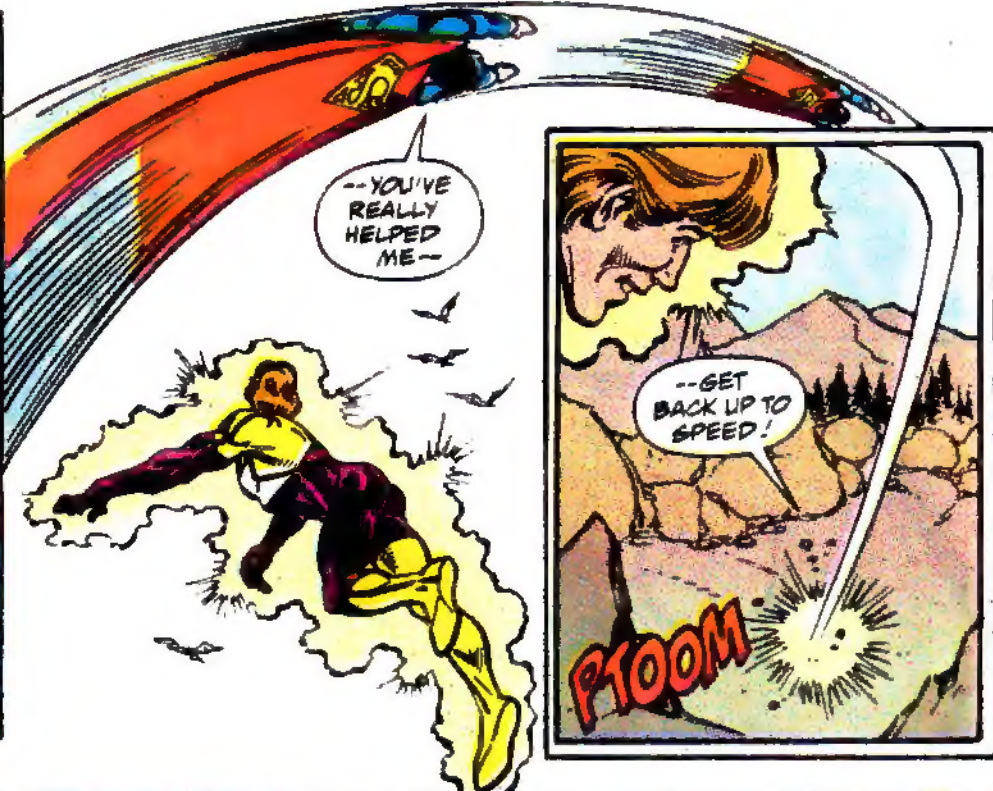
ROGER STERN & GEORGE PEREZ
STORY

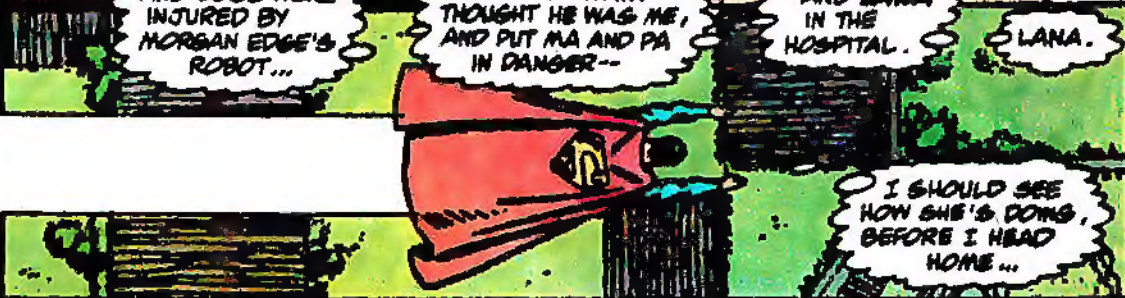
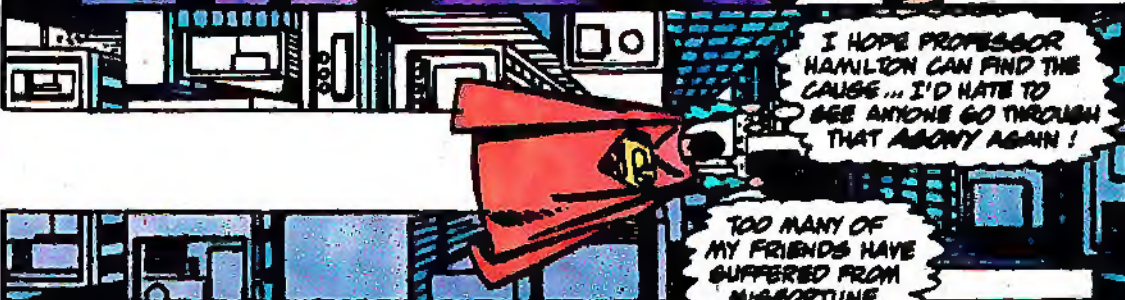
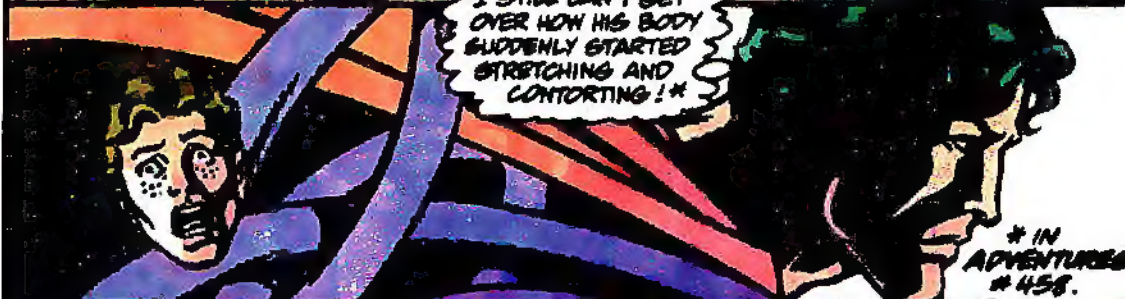
GEORGE PEREZ & BRETT BREEDING
ART

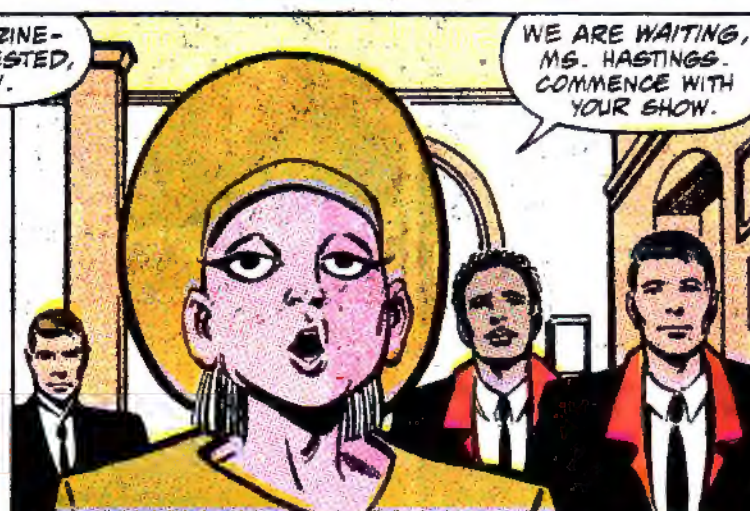
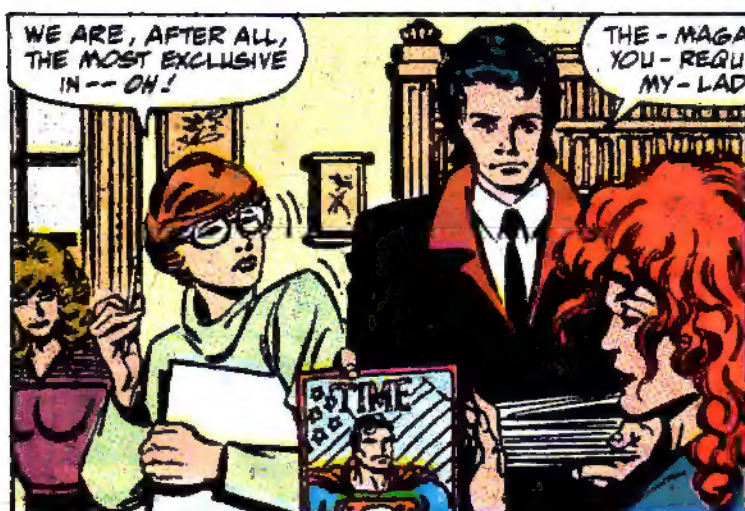
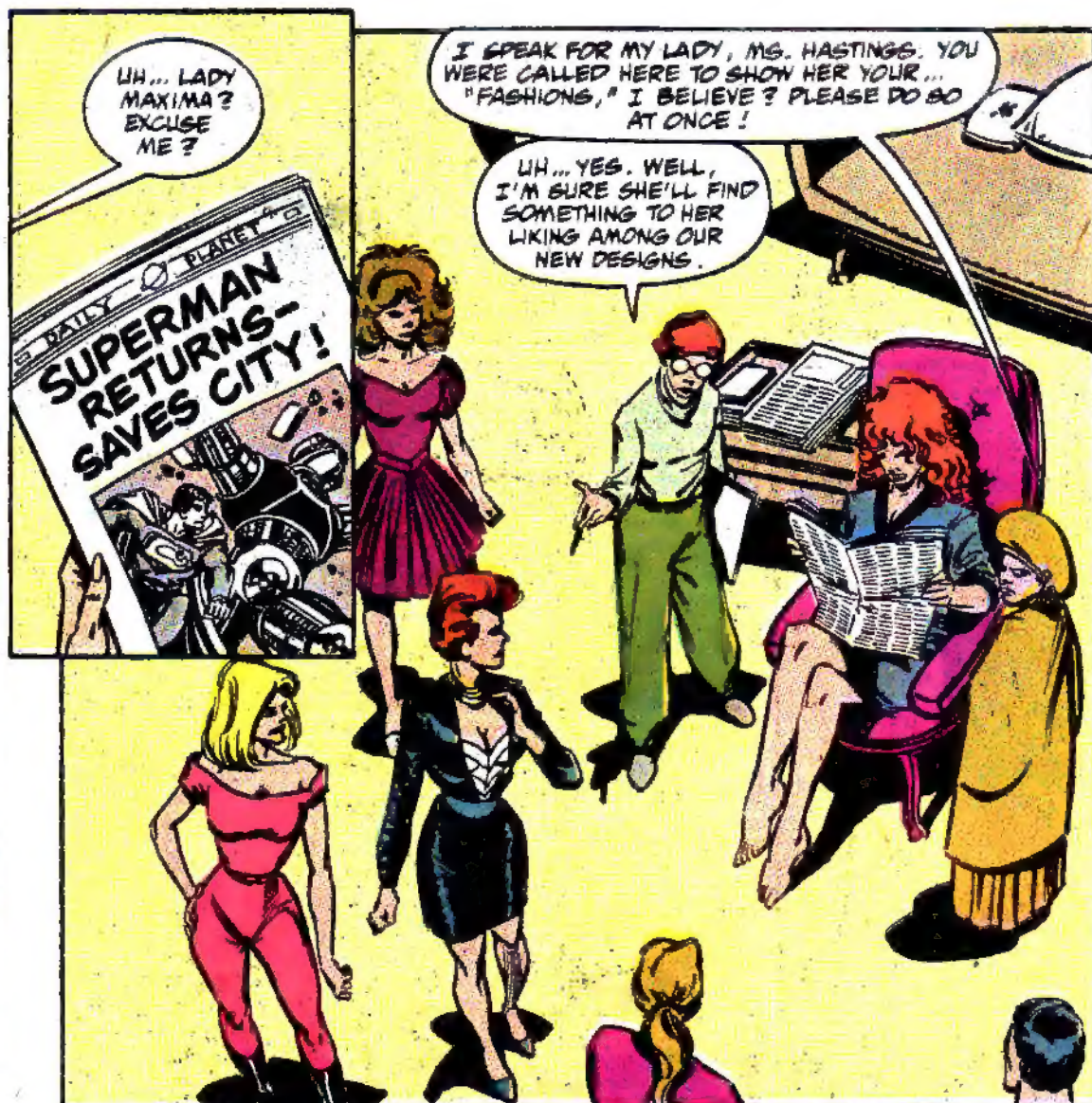
BILL OAKLEY ~ lettering
GLENN WHITMORE ~ coloring

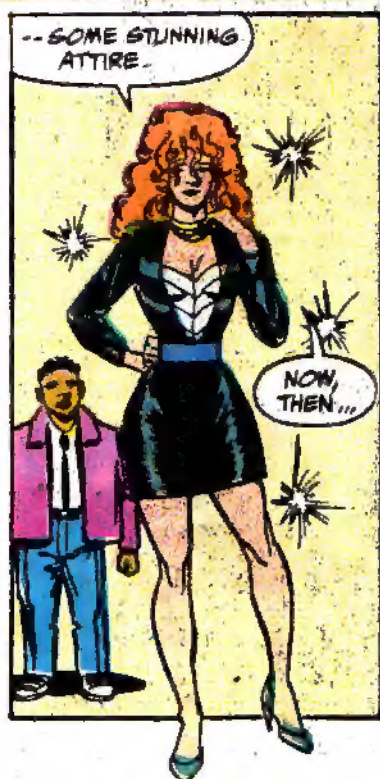
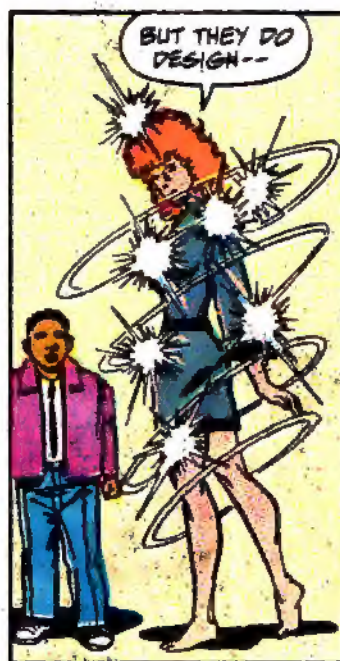
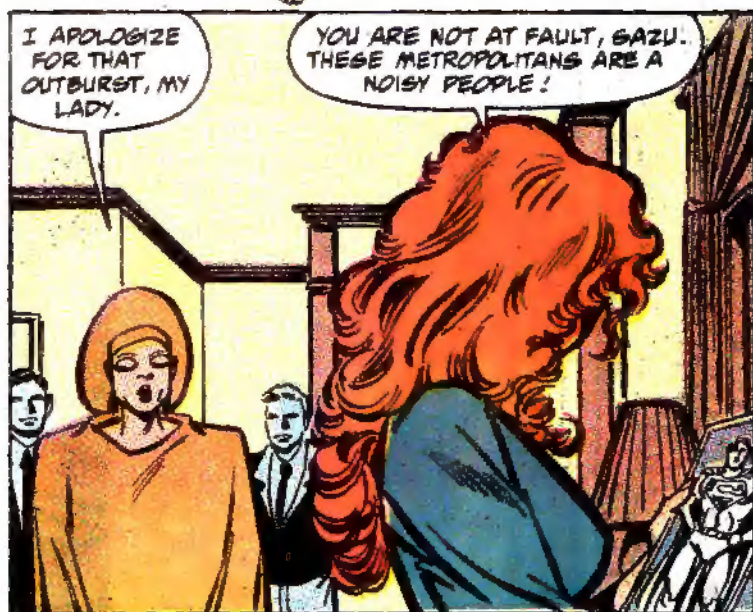
JON PETERSON
ASSOCIATING

MIKE CARLIN
EDITING









LOWELL COUNTY,
KANSAS...



HELLO, LANA. I'M SORRY... I
DIDN'T MEAN TO WAKE YOU.

'SOKAY. I'VE BEEN
DOZING ALL DAY.

HOW DO
YOU FEEL?

NOT BAD.
ANY LUCK FINDING
MATRIX?

NONE. IT'S AS IF HE DIS-
APPEARED FROM THE
FACE OF THE EARTH.

LANA, I'M
SORRY...

ABOUT
WHAT?

IF I HADN'T BROUGHT
MATRIX BACK TO
SMALLVILLE, NONE
OF THIS WOULD'VE
HAPPENED.

IT'S ALL RIGHT...
REALLY. I HEAL
PRETTY FAST.

SIGN MY
CAST WHEN I
GET OUT?

OF COURSE I WILL.
BUT IF YOU WANT TO
KEEP HEALING, YOU'D
BETTER GET BACK
TO SLEEP.

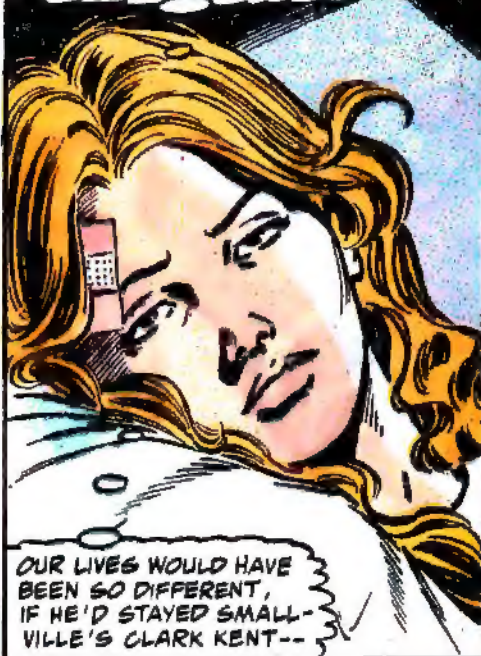
YES,
"DOCTOR!"

TAKE
CARE.

YOU TAKE
CARE, TOO!

I WISH HE WOULDN'T
BE SO HARD ON HIMSELF.
HE SHOULDERS SO MANY
RESPONSIBILITIES.

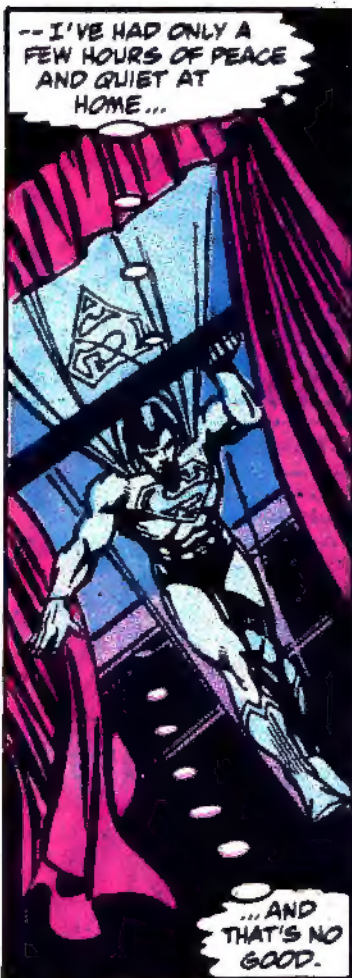
IT'S SELFISH OF ME, BUT...
SOMETIMES I WISH HIS POWERS
HAD NEVER DEVELOPED.



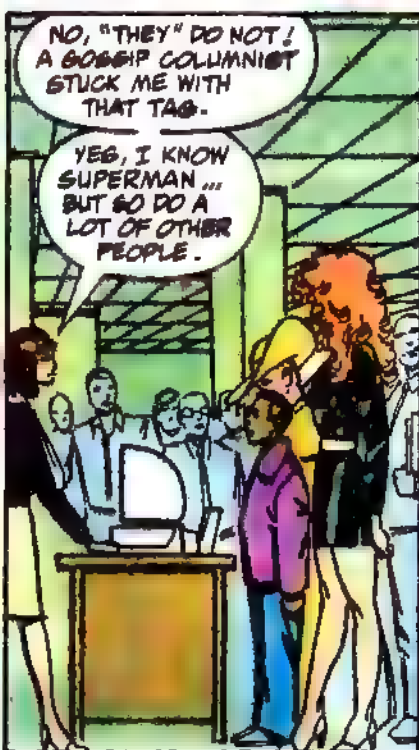
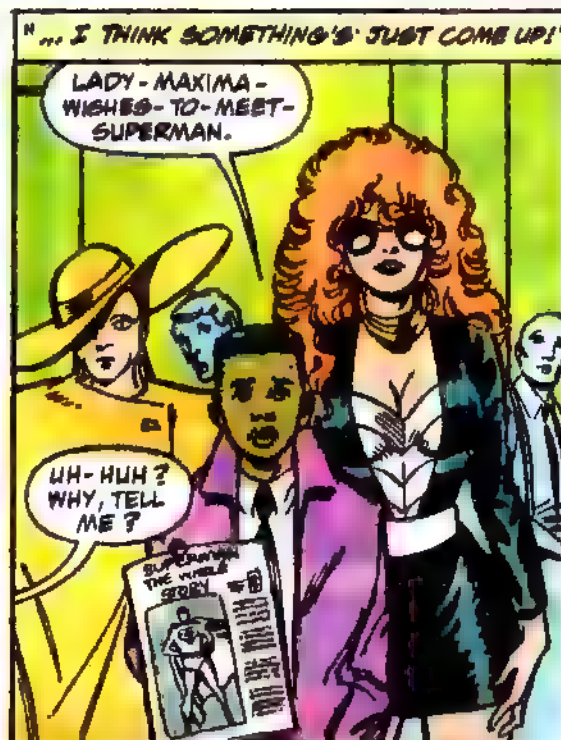
OUR LIVES WOULD HAVE
BEEN SO DIFFERENT,
IF HE'D STAYED SMALL-
VILLE'S CLARK KENT--

"-- AND NEVER BECOME THE WORLD'S SUPERMAN !"

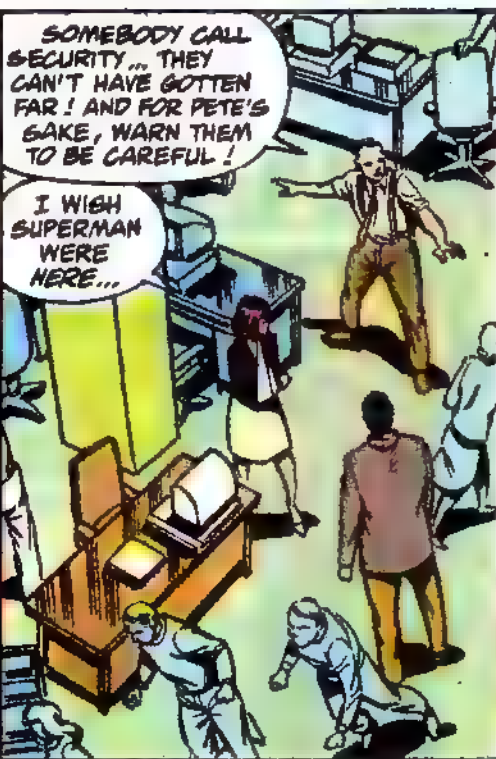
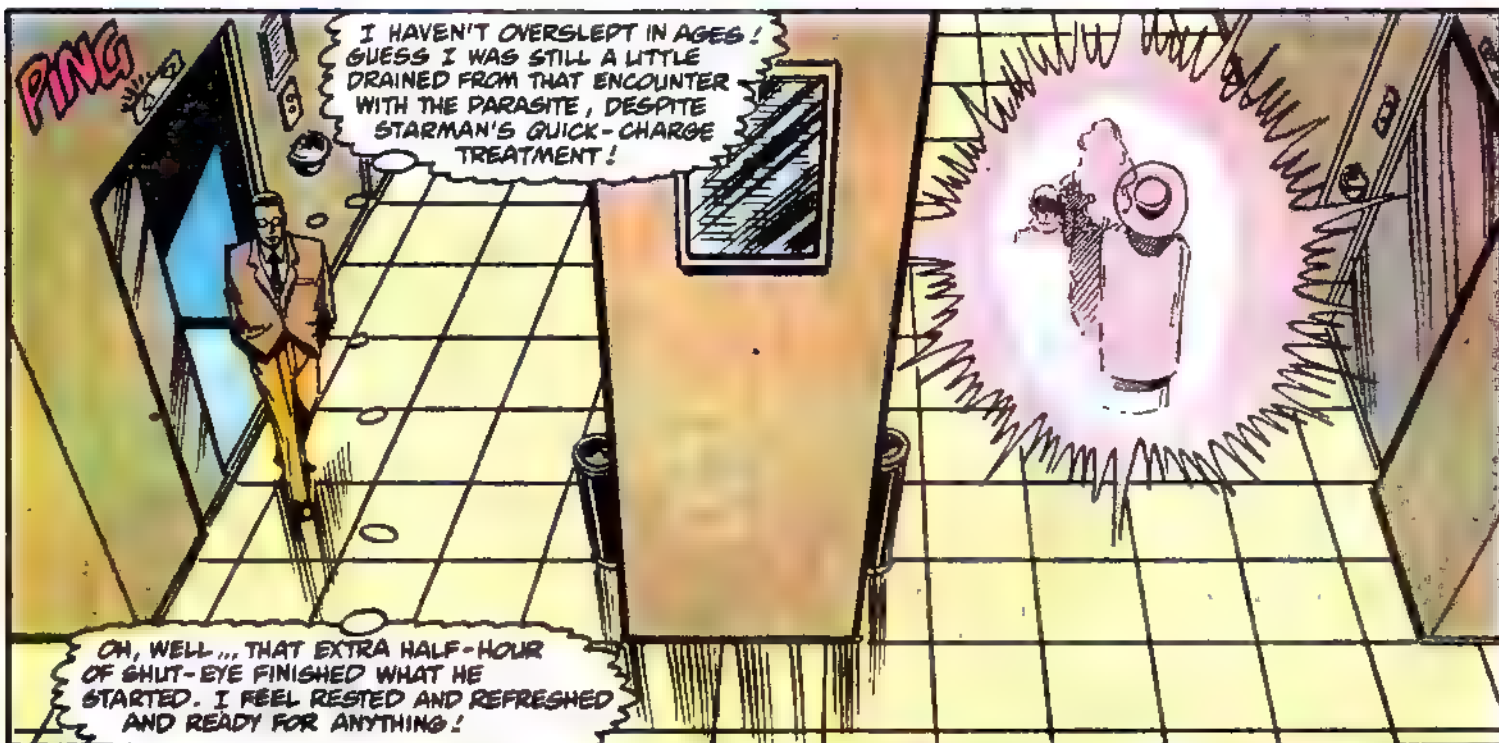
I STILL GET A THRILL WHENEVER I SEE THE METROPOLIS SKYLINE !

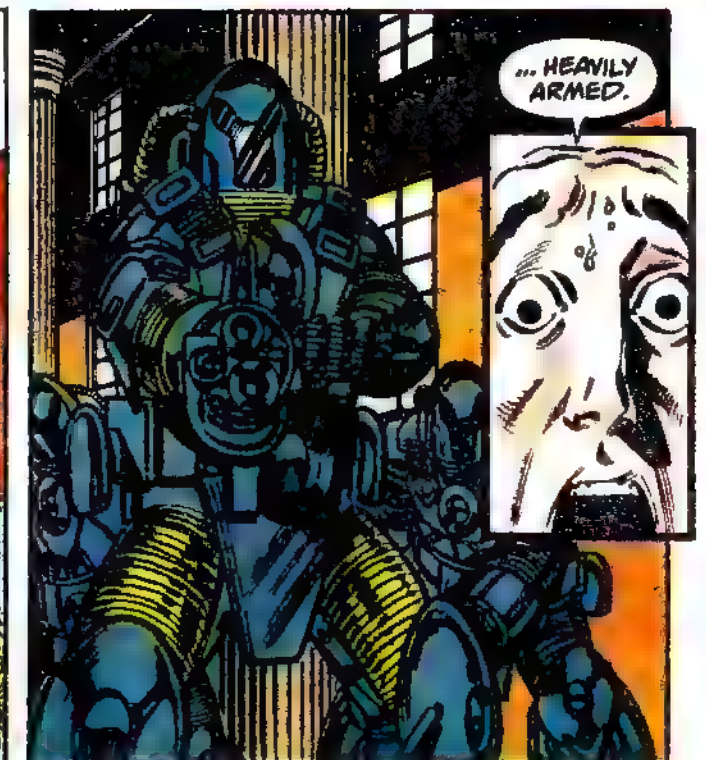
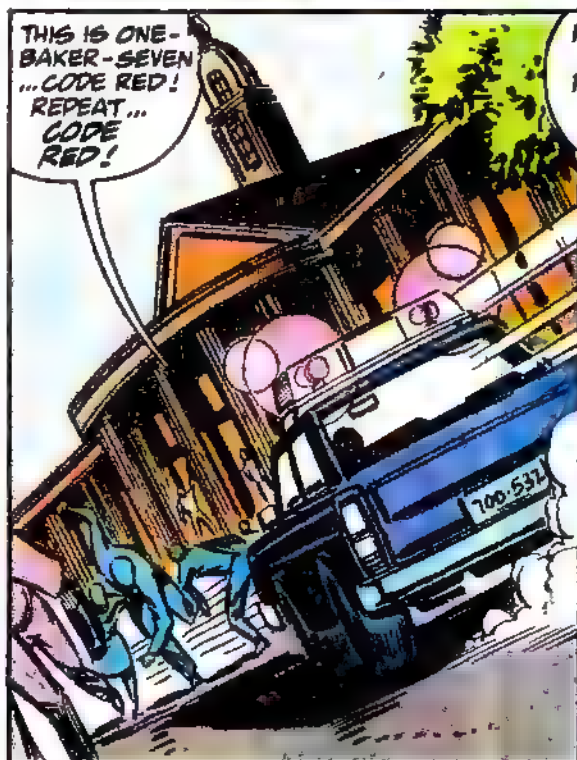
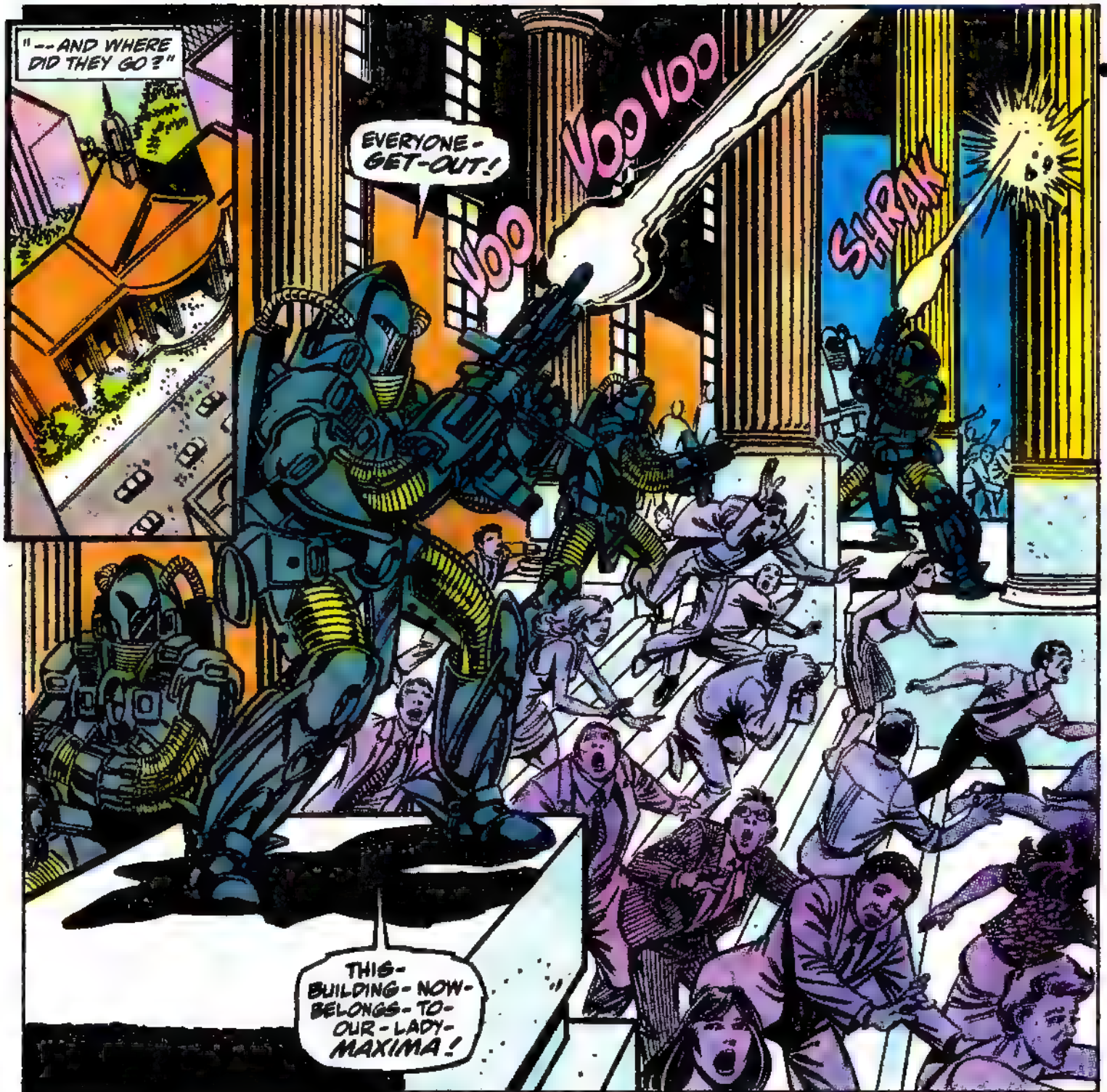


MORNING ...











MY-LADY'S-FORCES-HAVE-BEEN-VICTORIOUS.



THE-BUILDING-IS-SECURED.

I STILL CANNOT QUITE BELIEVE --



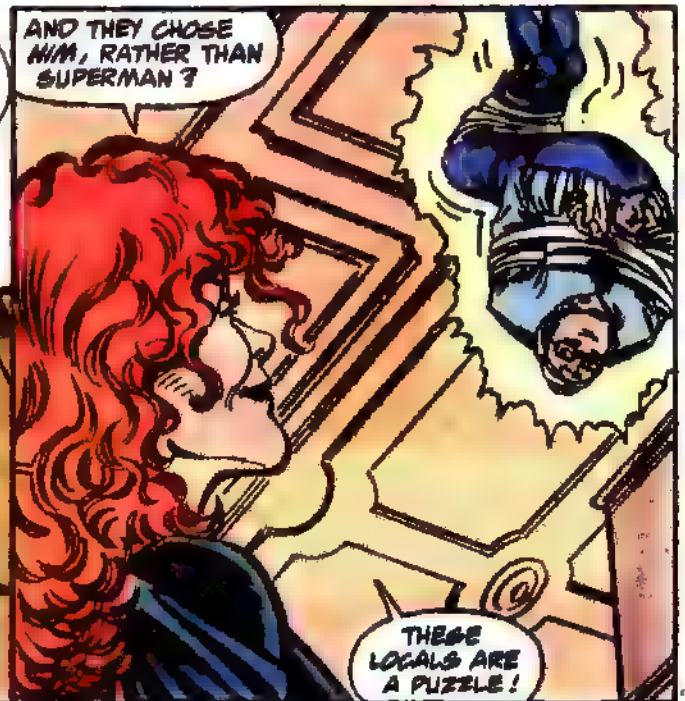
--THAT THIS LITTLE MAN IS THE CITY RULER!

WHAT IS HE CALLED AGAIN, SARU?

"THE MAYOR," MY LADY.



FROM WHAT I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DETERMINE, HE WAS ELECTED TO RULE BY THE CITIZENRY.



AND THEY CHOSE HIM, RATHER THAN SUPERMAN?

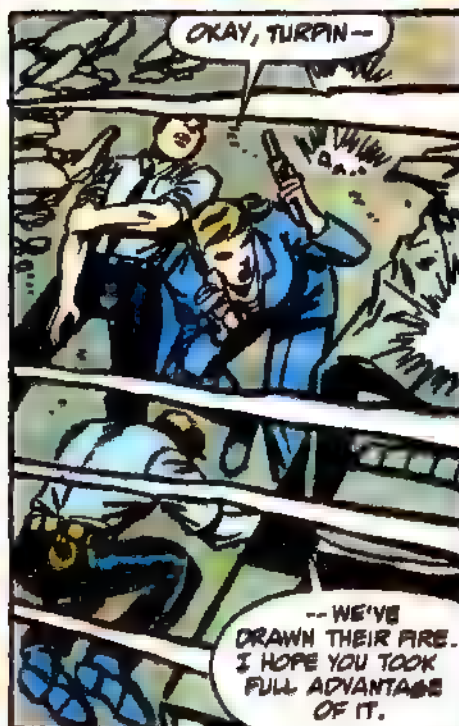
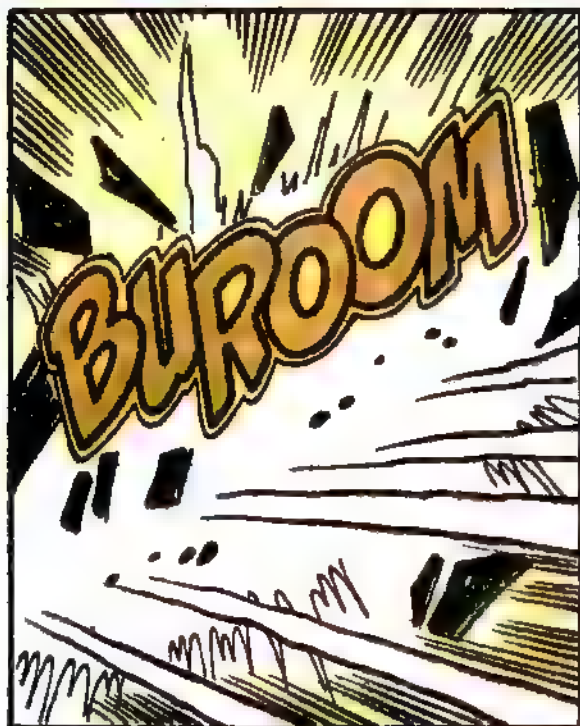
THESE LOCALS ARE A PUZZLE!



MY-LADY-THE-POLICE-ARE-GROUPING-OUTSIDE.



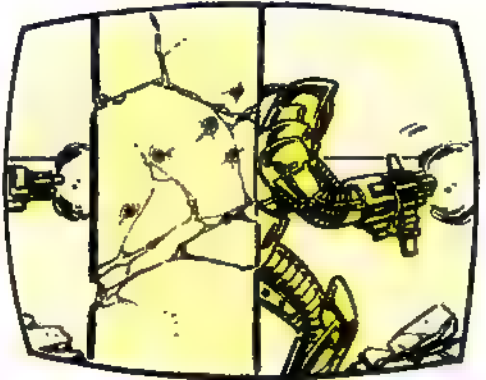
REALLY? IT SHOULD BE MOST AMUSING...



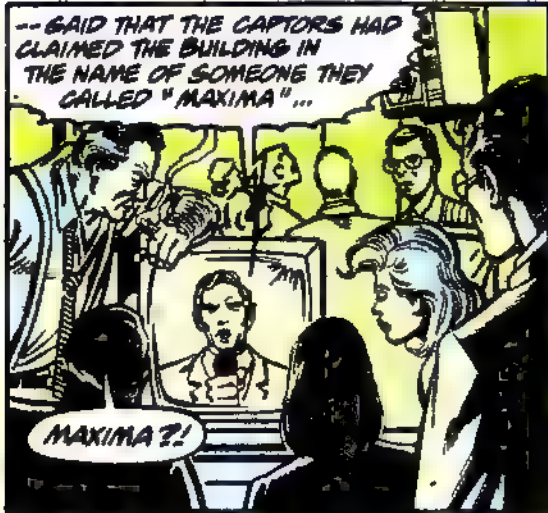
... METROPOLIS POLICE ARE AT THIS HOUR FIGHTING TO RETAKE CITY HALL FROM AN AS-YET UNIDENTIFIED FORCE OF ARMED MEN.

WE HAVE A REPORT-- AND I'D LIKE TO EMPHASIZE THAT THIS HAS NOT BEEN CONFIRMED-- THAT MAYOR BERKOWITZ IS BEING HELD PRISONER IN HIS OFFICE.

THE POLICE SPECIAL CRIMES UNIT HAS SO FAR BEEN UNABLE TO ADVANCE AGAINST THE WITHERING FIREPOWER OF CITY HALL'S CAPTORS...



... AND SEVERAL OFFICERS HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY WOUNDED. ONE WITNESS TO THE TAKEOVER--



-- SAID THAT THE CAPTORS HAD CLAIMED THE BUILDING IN THE NAME OF SOMEONE THEY CALLED "MAXIMA"...

MAXIMA?!



KENT, GET OVER THERE--



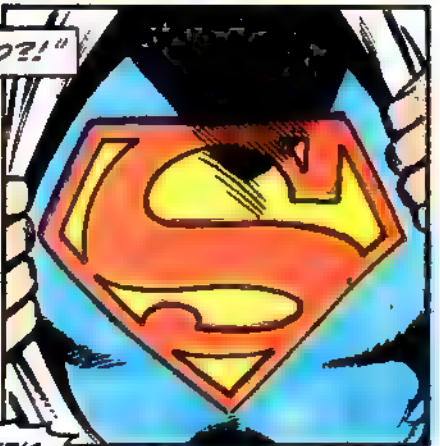
--AND SEE WHAT YOU CAN--

KENT?



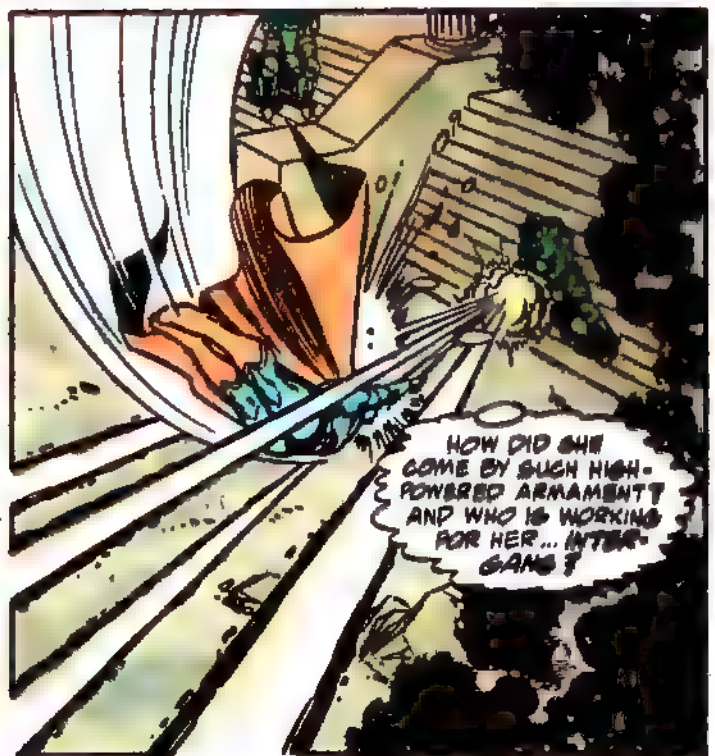
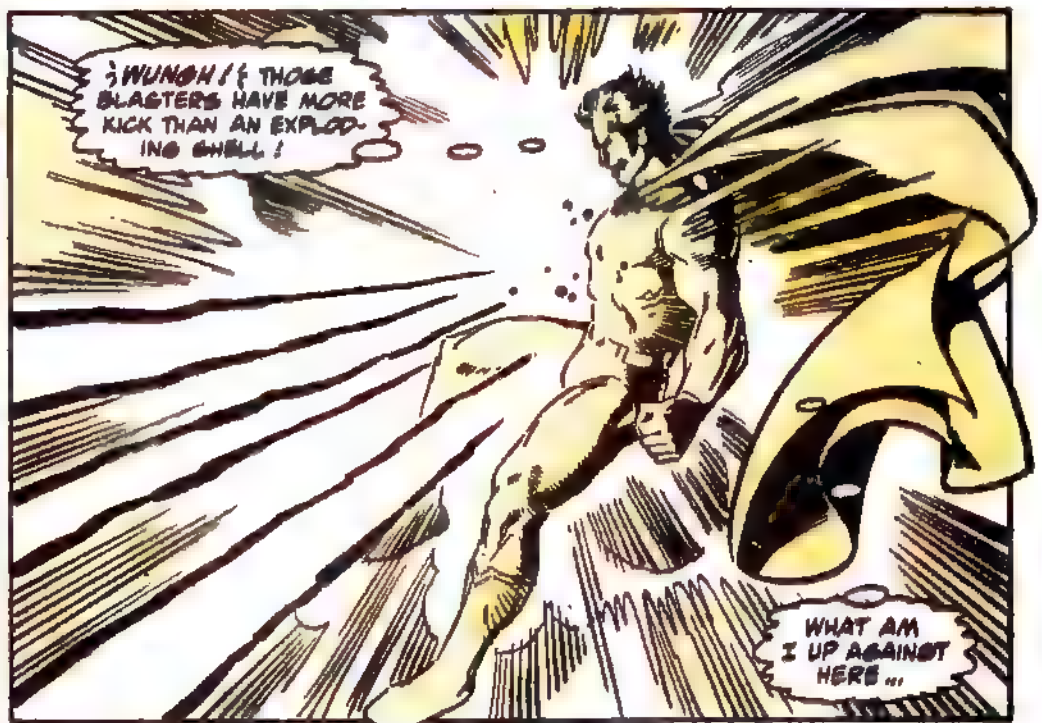
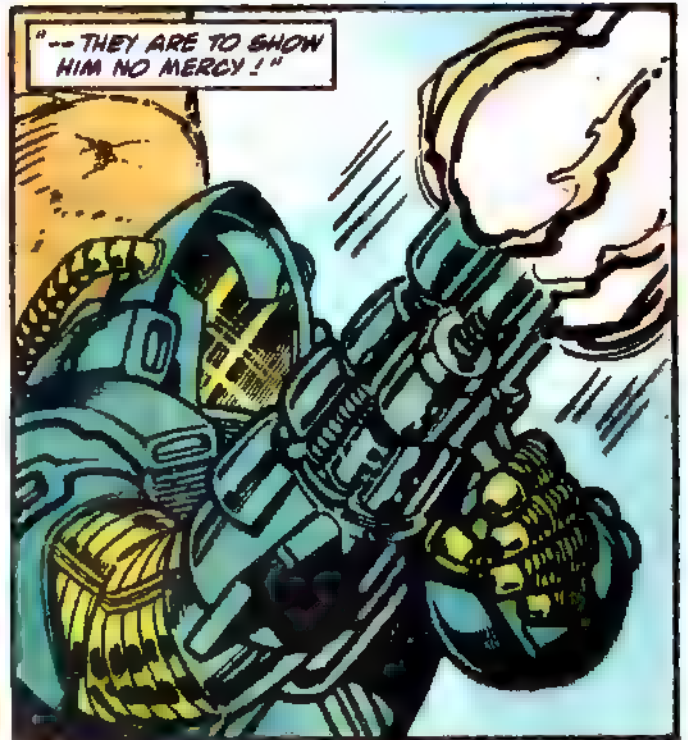
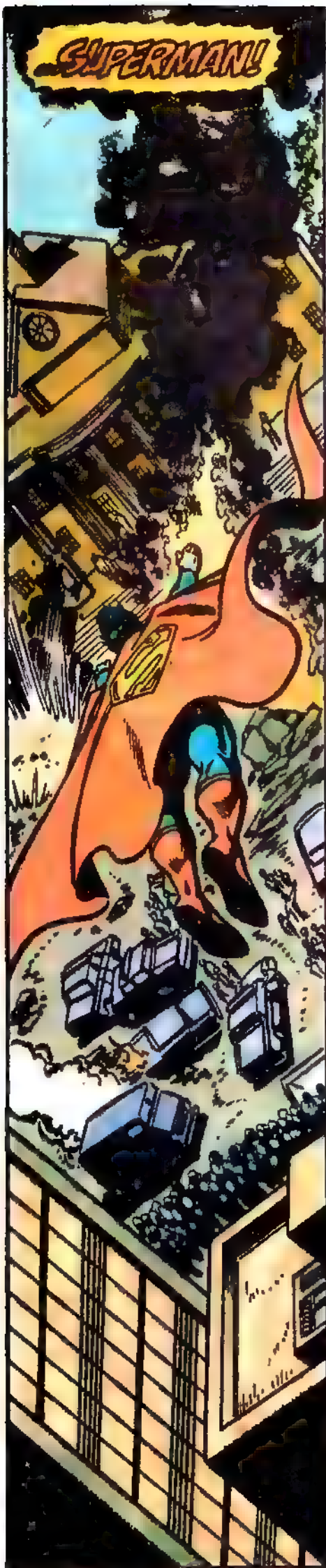
"NOW, WHERE IN BLAZES DID HE GO?!"

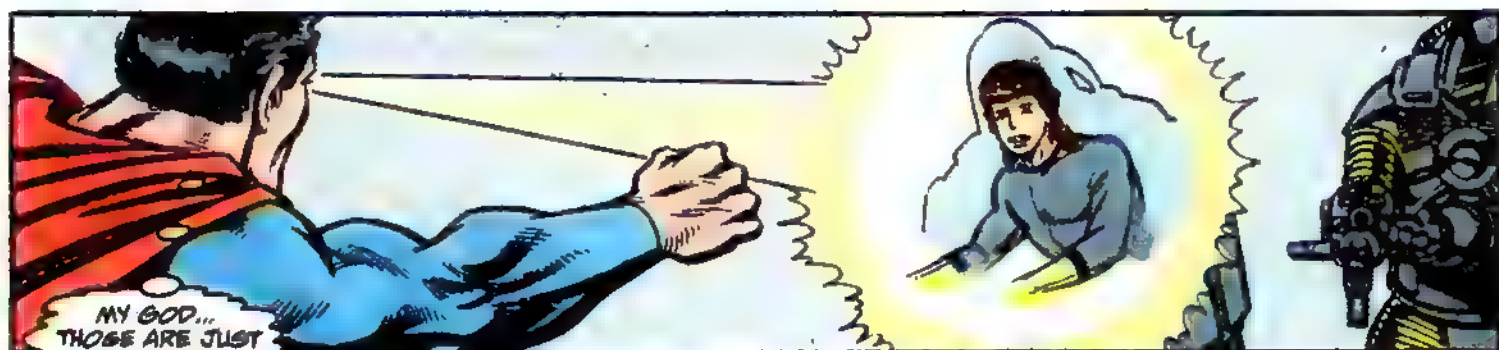
STORE ROOM



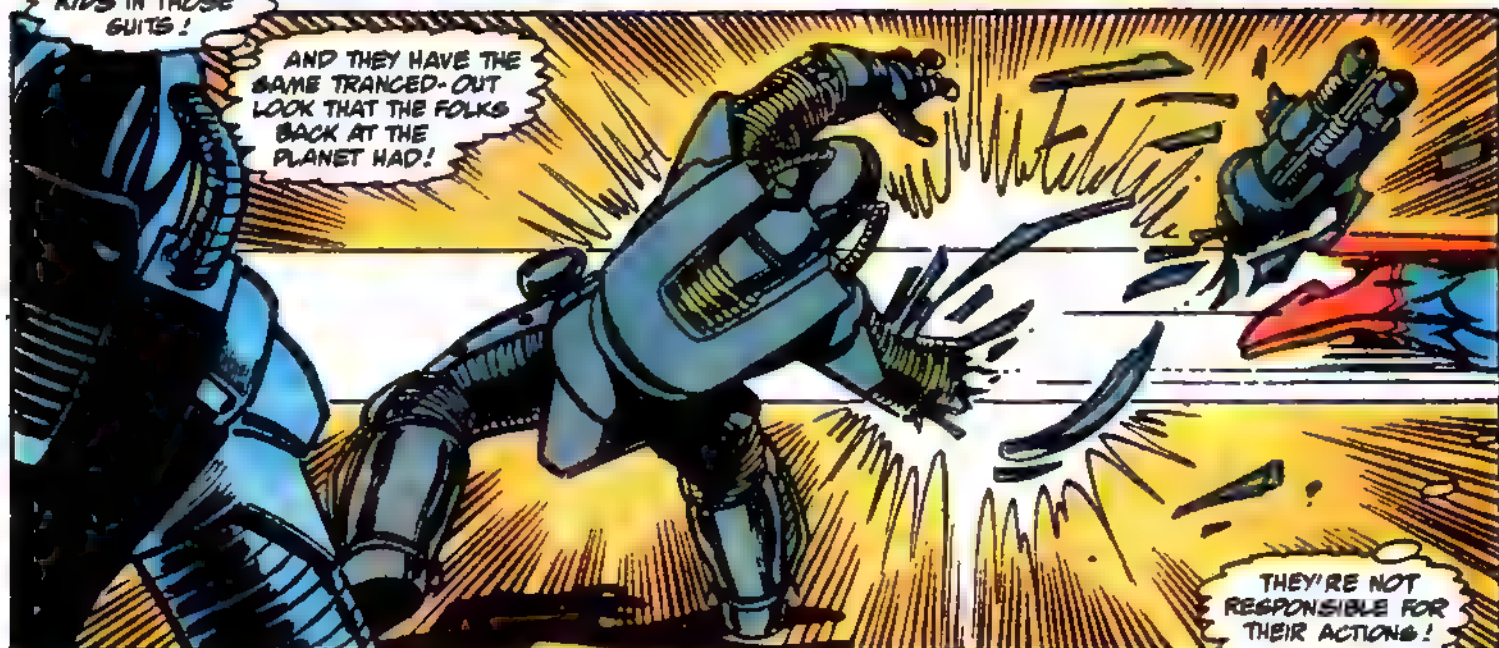
IN THIS REPORTER'S OPINION, THERE IS ONLY ONE MAN WHO HAS A CHANCE OF STOPPING THIS CARNAGE...

... ONLY ONE MAN WHO CAN SAVE US...



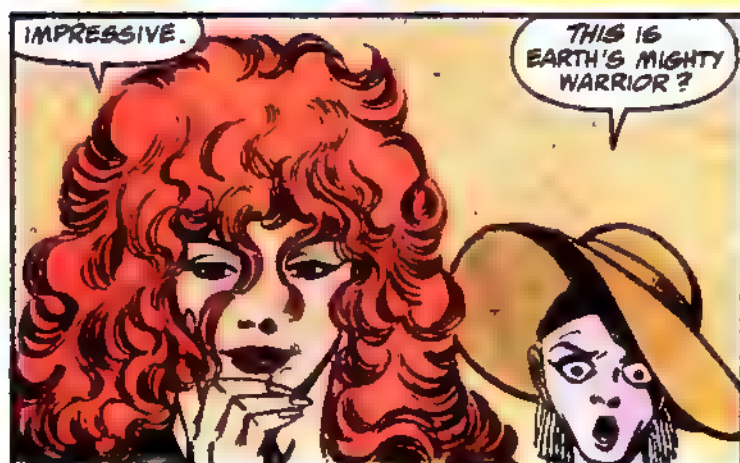


MY GOD...
THOSE ARE JUST
KIDS IN THOSE
SUITS!



AND THEY HAVE THE
SAME TRANCED-OUT
LOOK THAT THE FOLKS
BACK AT THE
PLANET HAD!

THEY'RE NOT
RESPONSIBLE FOR
THEIR ACTIONS!



IMPRESSIVE.

THIS IS
EARTH'S MIGHTY
WARRIOR?

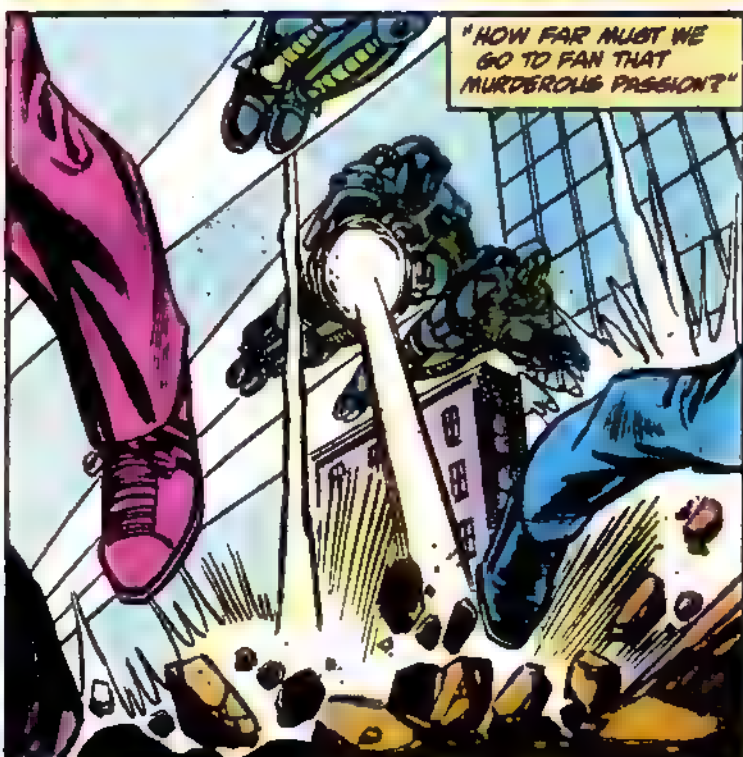


I CANNOT
BELIEVE IT!
WHY--

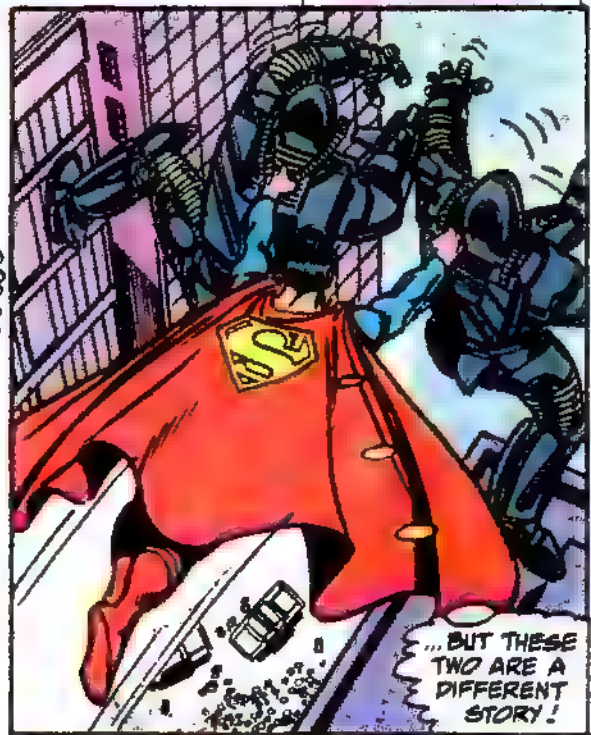
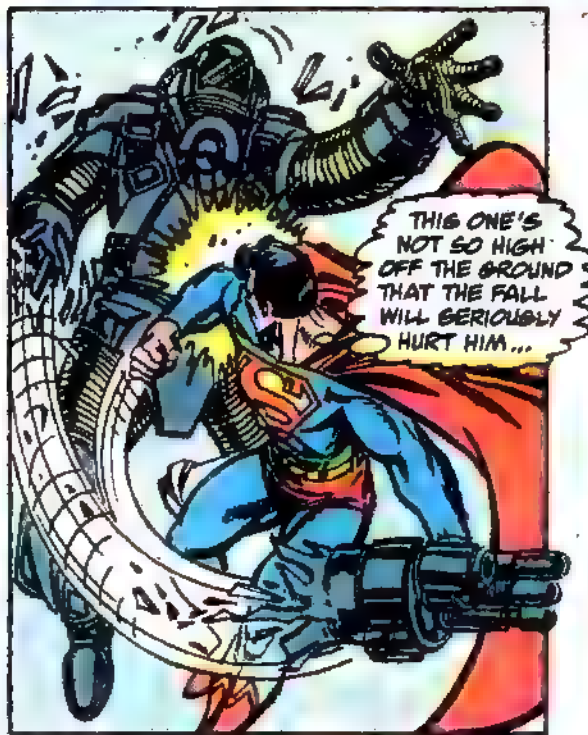
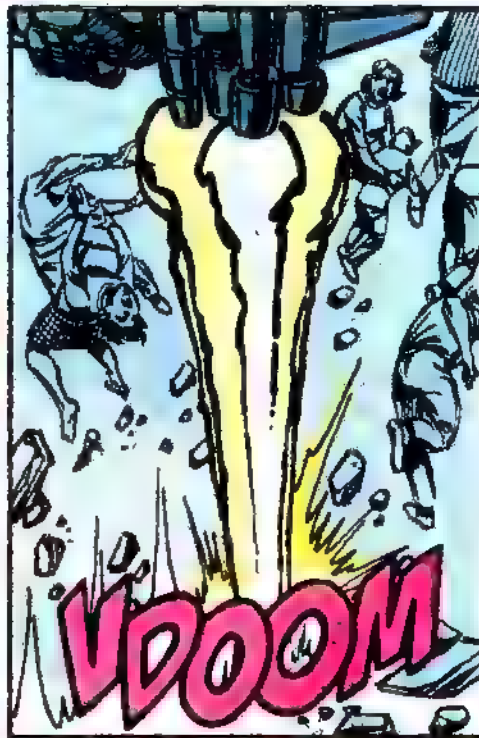
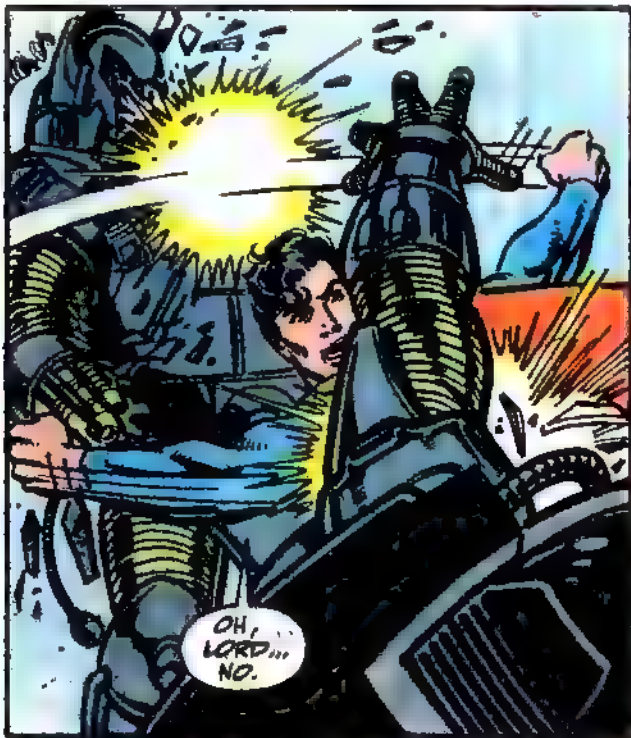


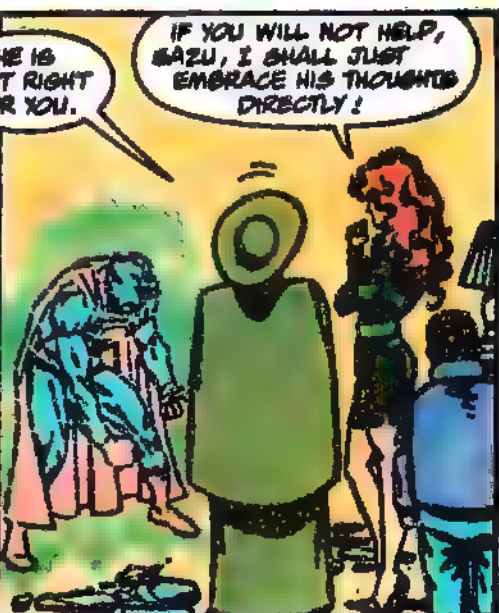
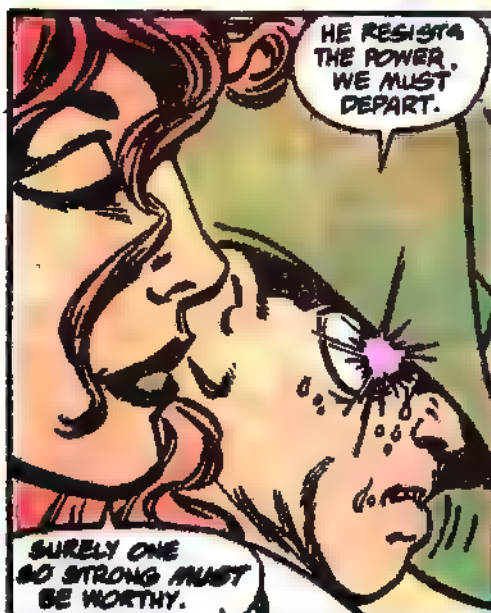
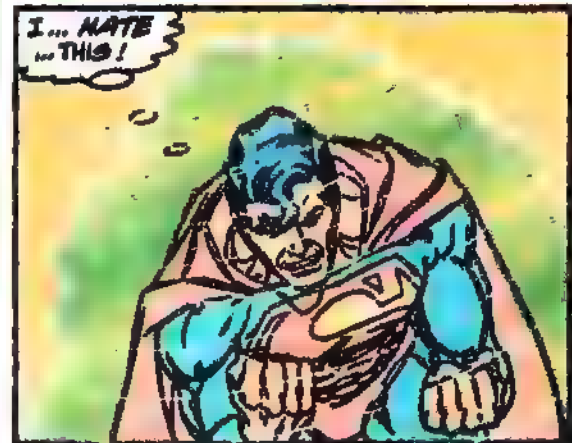
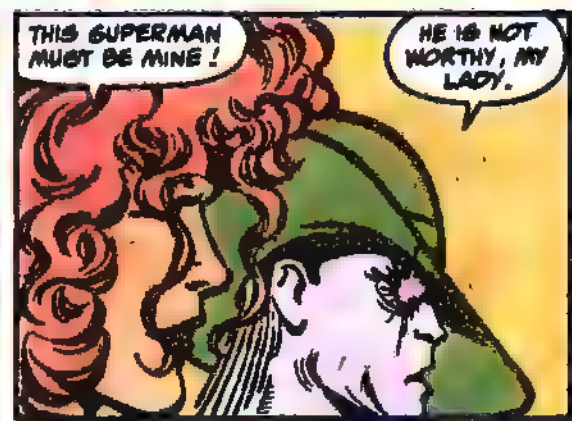
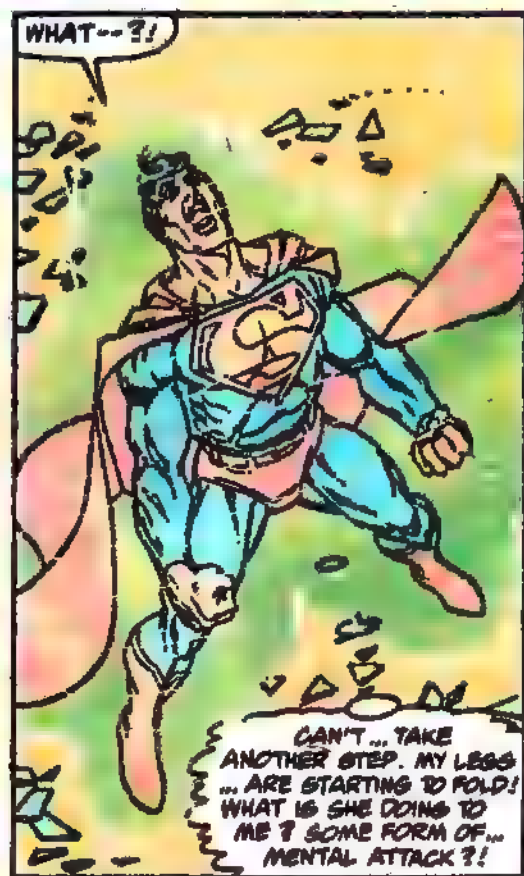
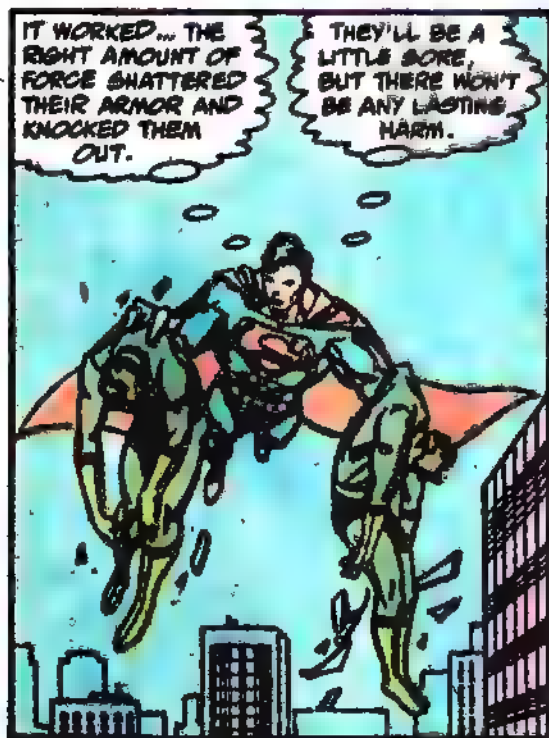
-- HE IS NOT EVEN TRYING TO KILL HIS OPPONENTS!

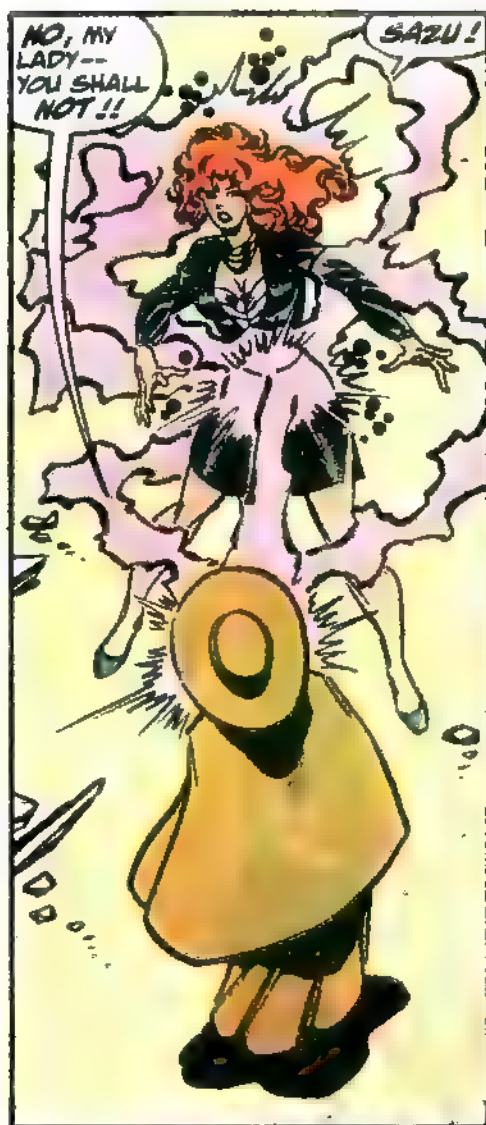
"WHERE IS THE
FIRE IN HIS
SOUL?"



"HOW FAR MUST WE
GO TO FAN THAT
MURDEROUS PASSION?"







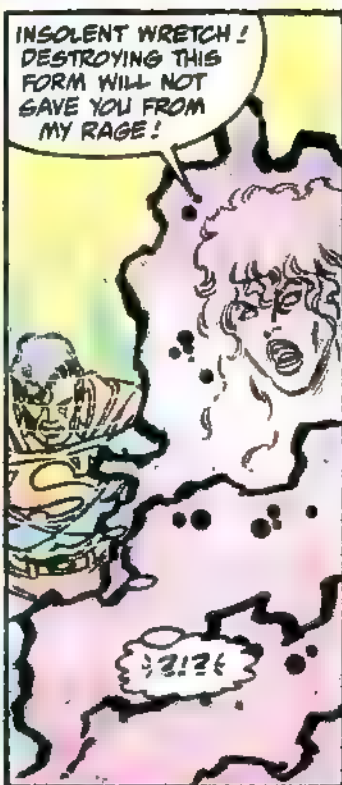
NO, MY LADY-- YOU SHALL NOT!!

SAZU!



YOU DARE TO DEFY ME?!

THOUGH IT PAINS ME, I MUST! MY FIRST RESPONSIBILITY IS TO THE ROYAL HOUSE... YOUR LINE MUST NOT BE WEAKENED BY UNWORTHY BLOOD!



INSOLENT WRETCH! DESTROYING THIS FORM WILL NOT SAVE YOU FROM MY RAGE!

!!!!

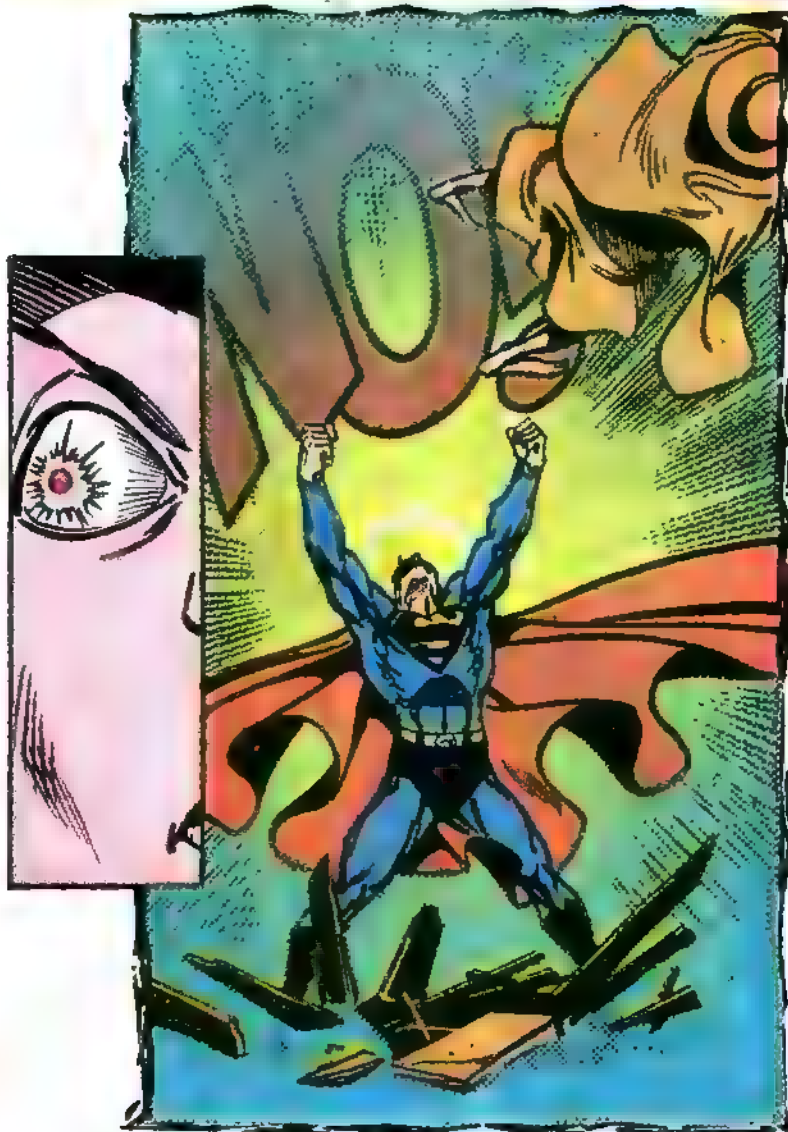


SUPERMAN! OPEN YOUR MIND... EMBRACE THAT WHICH IS MAXIMA...

SHE'S... DISSOLVING?



AND I CAN'T STOP IT?!



HUH? S-SUPERMAN?

WHAT'S GOING ON?

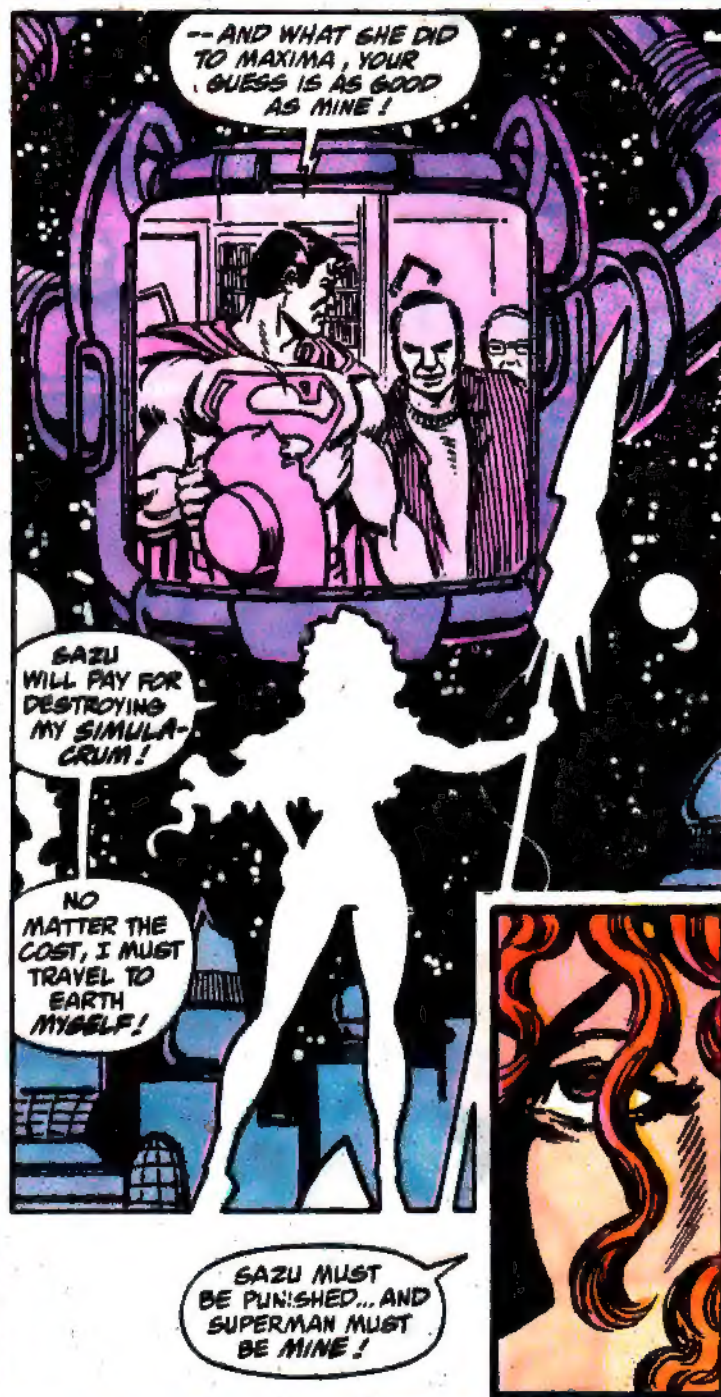
I'M NOT CERTAIN, SON. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MR. MAYOR?



I - I BELIEVE SO.

DO YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT MAXIMA?

MAXIMA? LAST THING I 'MEMBER IS SEEIN' HER BLOW AWAY 'BERTO! HOW'D I GET HERE?



THE STORY OF MAXIMA HAS JUST BEGUN! IT WILL CONTINUE TO UNFOLD IN THE MONTHS TO COME!

IN THE MEANTIME, JOIN US HERE NEXT ISSUE FOR...

"BURIAL GROUND!"



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YOUR Re-Actions, that is ... to the new ACTION COMICS! The Superman family of books—SUPERMAN, ADVENTURES OF, and now ACTION have been garnering a tremendous reaction over the last six or seven months and we thank you all! Here, for your edification and enjoyment, are your own thoughts and comments each and every month concerning our efforts here in ACTION COMICS monthly. We'd like to start off this series of letters of comment with your missives concerning this year's ACTION COMICS ANNUAL—so here goes...

Dear Editor:

Re: ACTION COMICS ANNUAL #2...

"Memories of Krypton's Past" is what the Superman legend is all about.

Epic adventure. It's about the grandeur that can be captured only on the four-color page—the spectacular sweep of the human imagination at its zenith ... the exhilaration of a superb story superbly told.

It's a story of intrigue and violence, bloodshed, and debasement—and it's a story of triumph as well—for the greatest super-hero of them all. The 48-page format allows for subtleties that might be missed amidst the clutter of a standard multi-issue saga, and the longer format helps supply room to explore and clarify some of Superman's motivations. Plus, an important era of Krypton's cloudy history is explored with the aid of an alien holy man, here known simply as the "Cleric."

This adventure is about:

—Superman fighting full-tilt in gladiator-style combat, bringing alive a great warrior's legend...

—Deep, black space—to match the heart of the Warlord's ruler, Mongul ... the emperor who presides over the barbaric slaughter labeled the "Games"...

—Clear, active artwork that challenges the eye to take the measure of the vastness and the beauty of graphic comic art panels at their pinnacle.

Those are just some of the reasons to applaud the impressive, epic adventure of ACTION ANNUAL #2. The heart surges ... the imagination soars. We are in the presence of a great myth and a great reality.

The primary reason for these hosannas, though, is that it is invigorating to discover in this Annual giants in an age of pygmy comic book chroniclers—writers and pencillers who churn out twenty-two page splatter titles that have the heft, breadth, and sanctity of bath-

room tissue.

Kudos and felicitations to Brett Breeding, Mike Carlin, Mike Mignola, Bill Oakley, Jerry Ordway, George Perez, John Statema, Roger Stern, Curt Swan, and Glenn Whitmore. Thanks to these modern adventurers, Superman continues—his adventure grander than ever.

Howard T. Kidd
Manilla, IA

"Giants"? Surely you realize that even those you've named giants have need of the toilet paper you also mentioned, Howard. All part of some greater Cosmic Plan, we assume.

Dear Mike:

Kudos to all those who lent their skills to ACTION ANNUAL #2.

Telling the story in one consecutive sequence, without breaking for "chapters," kept this tale from having any interruptions and made the transitions from artists to artists so subtle that it wasn't noticeable.

And I had actually pondered why no Kryptonians had ever tried to leave their planet to explore the universe. It was nice to see the answer spelled out in print finally.

Here's to Superman's full return to ACTION.

Melissa Page
236 New Salem Loop
Nortonville, KY 42442

More kudos ... thank you, Melissa, for your continued support.

Dear Mike:

I'm really surprised that the combined efforts of three writers, three pencillers and three inkers could be so gracefully arranged into a smooth and cohesive story. My favorite art was the Mignola/Perez collaboration—but it all looked good.

One problem I noticed was that Superman says he was born on Earth. He says this twice (pages 9 and 15). It's kind of strange to see him do battle as the last son of Krypton when he keeps saying he was born on Earth. It was supposed to say "borne TO Earth," right?

I was also glad I didn't have to wait a week for the next chapter, too.

Charlie Harris
2657 N. Mountain
Tucson, AZ 85719

At last! Someone who didn't mind that we missed shipping the ACTION ANNUAL by one week! Bless you, Charlie ... feel like writing a letter to our bosses mentioning the same? Hmmm?

Sorry to say that "Born (no 'E') on Earth" is exactly what we meant, Chas. Superman—the last son conceived on Krypton, and borne to Earth in a gestation chamber—was, in fact, born from said chamber upon arrival here on our soil. Thanks, though, for providing us with the opportunity to clear up that little bit of trivia for everybody.

Dear Mike:

In my country at least, ACTION ANNUAL #2 and SUPERMAN #32 arrived together, so I've just completed reading the two sequential stories.

Whilst I remain, as yet, unsatisfied as to how these events will convince the Man of Steel that his executioner's actions are now acceptable, the climax to his exile is becoming more and more intriguing and exciting. Indeed, given the revelations about his Kryptonian history, it may be that Superman will feel a need to preserve himself as the last survivor of his race and that this will be the prime motivational factor in his return to Earth. That, coupled with a clear love for his adopted planet, and a recognition that Earth remains the best place to keep that heritage alive. Also, having read George Perez's text piece in the annual, this would also fit in with his ideas for having the third Superman title explore that aspect of Kal-El's self.

Superman's battle with his fellow "gladiators" and then with Mongul were a reminder of everything that typifies this greatest of heroes. His strength, his nobility, his morality, and his spirit were all in evidence. This was a time for overcoming weaknesses and allowing belief to win the day—and it did, with the aid of the mysterious Cleric, a man from Krypton's past. This was a new piece of information pertaining to Superman's origins cleverly woven into what is known of his planet's story, without contradicting anything that's been told before, and it looks like more revelations are to follow. I'm sure the next two chapters in this story will indeed be momentous, for Clark as well as for us out here.

One thing that occurred to me during the story is the scale on which events were unfolding. Mongul's world-conquering campaigns were the equiva-

lent of another race taking over and decimating our entire solar system—in a week! Space-faring beings who decimate worlds as easily as you or I 'decimate' breakfast are too commonly introduced into comics without the consequences of their actions really being considered—yet for the people on the planets that fell under Mongul's armies, the end of their world had literally arrived. I think it's important to realize the enormity of these events, although it's difficult to appreciate them. Superman's decision not to kill such a man begins establishing his own code more strongly than any way it might've been violated by the deaths of the Phantom Zone criminals.

Hmmmm ... we're definitely going to have to find another name for these comic books...

Malcolm Bourne
6 Craigwell Road
Prestwich, Manchester
M25 8EF, England

Howseabout funny books? Naah.

Dear DC:

Let's start with the Perez/Ordway cover. Reason? Every single time I look at it, I see some new detail that I didn't notice before. But doesn't everybody? Maybe ... maybe not. I don't know if it's the pencils, inks or colors (or all three combined). Whatever it is, it works and I love it. My compliments to Messrs. Perez and Ordway—and to everyone whose name isn't on the cover with them.

Was this book as difficult to write as I think it was? I can imagine the number of bottles of Tylenol you guys went through to get this book in order. But what do I know about writing a comic book? Heck, it might've been easy. Smooth or rough—I am impressed.

Not much more can be said about Curt Swan's art that hasn't been said a million times before. For those of us who have admired his work for years, it's plain to see that he was in top form.

I found it hard to distinguish Jerry Ordway's art from Curt Swan's in some places, which really says a lot about the quality of Mr. Ordway's work. I'm starting to think he improves with each panel he pencils. John Statema's inks over Mr. Ordway's art were icing, the cherry on the top.

To be honest, the only work by Mike Mignola I've liked has been the WORLD OF KRYPTON mini-series. Maybe Mr. Perez's inks gave him a boost, but I think he just about matched his work in WORLD OF KRYPTON. Mr. Mignola's pencils didn't seem rushed, as they often do. I think he did a good job.

To me, color is the life of the artwork, and with life there is action. Glenn Whitmore put the action in ACTION, and, as always, this was a terrific job by the man.

And finally, a gargantuan round of applause for Mr. Mike Carlin, conductor of the elite ACTION orchestra: the

Super-Team. Siegel and Shuster should be proud.

Bravo.

Michael T. Miller
202 Slaughter Road
Freeport, TX 77541

Awwwww, shucks, Mike...thanx!

Dear Editor (and numerous craftsmen):

While ACTION COMICS ANNUAL #2 went a little heavy on the philosophy, it was an interesting issue and gave us a nice preview of how the third Superman title will be handling the Man of Steel when it makes its debut shortly. Now, ancient history is not my forte—I thought the WORLD OF KRYPTON section of last year's Krypton/Smallville/Metropolis trilogy was quite boring because of the lack of Super-Hero action in it—and it doesn't sound very exciting at first reading that you will be concentrating on the Kryptonian ancestry angle one week a month. Then again, school isn't as big an ordeal as the whining child usually assumes it is—so I have to go to school to read SUPERMAN—so, I'll give it a try!

The Annual itself showed no seams whatsoever in the multi-part art job, so I'll ask you to list which artist did what pages. I'm curious.

When Superman talks about what a wonderful place Earth is and what he likes about it the most, you know what makes him special as well. What makes him tick is basically what makes a lot of us mortals tick—love of family, home and hearth, and love of the potential this whole planet stands for. All worth fighting for—as Superman does.

Charles D. Brown
39 Stockton Street
Brentwood, NY 11717

Here's how the art chores on ACTION ANNUAL #2 break down:

Jerry Ordway and John Statema did pages 1, 2, 3, 11 (panel 2/color effect), 12, 13, 14, 21, 22, 23, 29, 33 (panel 7), 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 45, 46 (bottom tier), 47 and 48 (right side panel).

Curt Swan and Brett Breeding did pages 4, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 19, 20, 26, 27 (panel 3/color effect), 28 (left side panel), 30, 31 (except panel 8), 41, 44, 46 (top tier), 48 (two inset panels).

And Mike Mignola and George Perez did pages 5, 6, 10, 11 (except panel 2/color effect), 17, 18, 24, 25, 27 (except panel 3/color effect), 28 (right side panel), 31 (panel 8), 32, 33 (except

panel 7), 37, 38, 42, 43, 46 (middle tier), 48 (left side panel).

Hey, Mike:

ACTION ANNUAL #2 was absolutely perfect. There were no flaws whatsoever in this book anywhere!

And if "Memories of Krypton's Past" is any indication of the (new) level of excellence which the third Superman title will be bringing to the fold, then I don't know if I'll be able to wait until June or not.

And I'm going to have to buy multiple copies to boot!

Uncle Elvis
17650 Dawson Road
Dawson Springs, KY 42408

Don't boot the books, Unc—mint condition is more valuable!

NEXT MONTH:

In SUPERMAN #36 being laid-up in the intensive care unit of Metropolis Hospital is no laughing matter for Morgan Edge—or so he comes to realize when he's bedeviled by a disgruntled ex-employee out for revenge. "Laugh, I Thought You'd Die!" is inked by Dennis Janke and it features Jerry Ordway's full writing and pencilling return to Super-Servicel!

In ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #459 George Perez and Dan Jurgens team up once again to take the Man of Steel to the frigid wasteland of Antarctica—in an effort to find a place of "Solitude" where he can rid himself of the life-threatening Kryptonian Eradicator forever.

And finally in ACTION COMICS #646 Roger Stern joins forces with the JUSTICE LEAGUE's Keith Giffen as Superman finds himself up against an ancient terror that has lain dormant beneath our South Pole since near the dawn of time. Any connection to the recent introduction of the Eradicator to the Antarctic Circle is purely coincidental.

—Mike Carlin





An Inviskid Scan